

Having described the invention, we claim:

1. A communication system comprising:
  - a data concentrator computer;
  - a gateway device for communicating with said data concentrator computer;
  - a first mobile data acquisition device communicating with said gateway device; and
  - a second mobile data acquisition device communicating with said gateway device,said gateway device allowing direct communication between said first and second mobile data acquisition devices without communication with said data concentrator computer.
2. The communication system as set forth in claim 1 wherein said first mobile data acquisition device initiates an "Am I Alive?" transmission.
3. The communication system as set forth in claim 1 wherein said first mobile data acquisition device sends a "Roll Call" request to said gateway device.

4. The communication system as set forth in claim 1 wherein said gateway device broadcasts a "Please Identify" message to said second mobile data acquisition device.

5. The communication system as set forth in claim 1 said second mobile data acquisition device transmits a device identification to said gateway device.

6. The communication system as set forth in claim 1 wherein said gateway device transmits an identification of said second mobile data acquisition device.

7.. The communication system as set forth in claim 1 wherein said first mobile data acquisition device communicates with said data concentrator computer through said gateway device.

8. The communication system as set forth in claim 1 wherein said data concentrator computer sends a "Please Identify" message to said gateway device.

9. The communication system as set forth in claim 1 wherein said first mobile data acquisition device indicates that "Roll Call" data is available.

10. The communication system as set forth in claim 1 wherein said data concentrator computer sends a "Send Roll Call" request to said first mobile data acquisition device through said gateway device.

11. A communication system comprising:  
a data concentrator computer;  
a mailbox for communicating with said data concentrator computer;  
a first mobile data acquisition device communicating with said mailbox; and  
a second mobile data acquisition device communicating with said mailbox,  
said mailbox allowing peer to peer communication between said first and second mobile data acquisition devices without communication with said data concentrator computer.

12. The communication system as set forth in claim 11 wherein said mailbox maintains Roll Call Data for said first and second mobile data acquisition devices.

13. The communication system as set forth in claim 11 wherein said mailbox services a Roll Call of said first and second mobile data acquisition devices.

14. The communication system as set forth in claim 11 further including a third mobile data acquisition device for communicating peer to peer with said first mobile data acquisition device.

15. The communication system as set forth in claim 11 wherein said mailbox generates a Last Roll Call Timestamp.

16. A computer program product for communication between a plurality of mobile devices, said computer program product comprising:

- a first instruction for activating a first mobile device;

- a second instruction for requesting a roll

call from a gateway device by the first mobile device;

a third instruction for broadcasting a please identify message to a second mobile device and a third mobile device; and

a fourth instruction for providing peer to peer communication between the first mobile device and the second and third mobile devices.

17. The computer program product as set forth in claim 16 further including a fifth instruction for adding device identification data for the second and third mobile devices to a mailbox.

18. The computer program product as set forth in claim 17 further including a sixth instruction for generating a history log of parsed roll call data by a data concentrator computer.

19. The computer program product as set forth in claim 18 further including a seventh instruction for transmitting identification data to the gateway device by the second and third mobile device and a fourth mobile device.

20. The computer program product as set forth in claim 19 further including an eighth instruction for transmitting a "Please Identify" message from the data concentrator computer to the first mobile device through the gateway device.